



INTRODUCTION

In 1988, the Town of Leesburg created the Department of Parks and Recreation to develop, administer, and manage its parks system, recreation facilities, and programs. The department utilizes the Leesburg Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission to serve as a liaison between staff and citizens. The Advisory Commission is appointed by Town Council to advise the department and Council.

The Parks and Recreation Department and the Advisory Commission developed and endorsed a mission statement as part of a Strategic Plan Workshop. The statement is as follows:

"The Town of Leesburg Department of Parks and Recreation is dedicated to providing high quality, wholesome recreation opportunities, programs and park facilities to meet the diverse needs of all citizens."

Included in this Strategic Plan Workshop was the development of goals for the department. Although the goals may remain constant, the objectives and strategies to reach these goals should be reviewed and revised as needed.

- Continue development of a comprehensive town park system
- Expand department services and opportunities provided to all citizens
- Establish a comprehensive public relations program to facilitate community awareness, understanding and support
- Strive to ensure fiscal viability
- Improve environmental quality of the area
- Maintain human resource development

The Town of Leesburg benefits from having a number of public, quasi-public, non-profit and private recreation facilities and program providers. This variety helps meet the many diversified needs and interests of the community. Leesburg residents have use of not only town parks and facilities, but also Loudoun County and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority facilities. Both provide an assortment of programs and parks.

In addition, a large number of special events are offered by the department and various organizations. These events provide entertainment for the community but also add to the economic welfare of the town by drawing tourists from the metropolitan area. Major events have included:

- First Night Leesburg (New Year's Eve)
- Leesburg Flower & Garden Festival
- Spring House & Garden Tour
- Independence Day Celebration
- Bluemont Concert Series
- Revolutionary War and Civil War reenactments
- August Court Days street festival
- Leesburg Hauntings (Halloween walking tour of historic sites)
- Holidays in Leesburg
- Holiday Arts & Crafts Show
- Christmas Tour of Historic District homes

PARKS AND FACILITIES

Overview

- Public parks and facilities are essential elements of a community. Parks that are well designed, properly located and adequately maintained greatly enhance the quality of community life by providing:
- A variety of both passive and active leisure time activities
- Visual relief from the man-made environment
- Definition of neighborhoods
- Buffers between land uses
- Protection and enhancement of environmental and historic resources

Existing Town of Leesburg Parks and Recreation Facilities

Town Parks

Ida Lee Park

A 138-acre town park with a recreation center, picnic shelter, playground and open space (located off North King Street). Phase II proposes, and two baseball/softball fields, two outdoor basketball courts and access road with parking.

Ida Lee Park was donated to the town by Mr. and Mrs. William F. Rust in 1975. The park was formerly known as Greenwood Farm, dating back to the 1700's. It was used for farming until construction of the park began in 1989. It is the focal point of the town's park system providing recreation facilities for Leesburg and Loudoun County.

Community Parks

Tuscarora Creek Park

A 31.63-acre community linear stream valley park with a picnic shelter, playground, parking lot, and trail accessing the W&OD trail (located between Lawson Road, S.E. and Battlefield Parkway).

Neighborhood Parks

Robinson Park

A 10-acre neighborhood park with a senior little league field and multi-purpose field (located at the northern end of Plaza Street, N.E., adjoining the Leesburg Elementary School property).

Foxridge Park

A 9.2-acre neighborhood park with a softball field, picnic shelter, restrooms and playground (located on the west end of Catocin Circle).

Greenway Park

A 4.0-acre neighborhood park with a tot lot, multi-purpose court, and open space located off Early Place in the Greenway Farms planned development).

A 3.0-acre passive neighborhood park (located in the Carrvale Subdivision between Marshall Drive and Cherry Lane, N.E.).

Raflo Park

A 3.0-acre passive neighborhood linear park with a gazebo, picnic tables, and access to the W. & O.D. Trail (located on South Harrison Street between Catoctin Circle and the W.&O.D. trail).

Brandon Park

A 2.0-acre passive neighborhood park (located on South Harrison Street along Tuscarora Creek).

Rotary Park

A 1.0-acre neighborhood park with a playground and basketball court (located at the intersection of Church and North Streets, N.E.).

Catoctin Park

A half-acre neighborhood linear park with a skate park (located next to the Rescue Squad on Catoctin Circle, S.E.).

Georgetown Park

A half-acre linear passive neighborhood park (located at the intersection of South Street and South King Street).

Future Town of Leesburg Parks and Recreation Facilities

Edwards Landing

A 32.0-acre community park with pavilion, parking lot, and nature trails planned for development (located in the Edwards Landing planned development in northeast Leesburg). The park will adjoin Balls Bluff Regional Park and the Potomac River.

Potomac Crossing Park

A 20-acre community park with proposed ballfield, tennis courts, play equipment and picnic shelter (located in the Potomac Crossing planned development in northeast Leesburg). This park will be leased to the Town by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority as part of the Balls Bluff Regional Park.

Table 9.1
Leesburg Park Inventory (1997)

Existing Leesburg Park Inventory			
Parks	Acres	Classification	Subclassification
Ida Lee	138	Town	Active
Tuscarora Creek	31.6	Community	Passive
Robinson	10	Neighborhood	Active
Foxridge	9.2	Neighborhood	Active
Greenway	4	Neighborhood	Active
Carrvale	3	Neighborhood	Passive
Raflo	3	Neighborhood	Passive
Brandon	2	Neighborhood	Passive
Rotary	1	Neighborhood	Active
Catoctin Park	0.5	Neighborhood	Active
Georgetown	0.5	Neighborhood	Passive
Subtotal	202.8		
Future Leesburg Park Inventory			
Edwards Landing	32	Community	Passive
Potomac Crossing	20	Community	Active
Subtotal	52		
TOTAL	254.8		

Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority Facilities

W&OD Railroad Regional Park

This is a 45-mile regional hiking/biking trail running through Leesburg from Alexandria to Purcellville. Formerly the Washington & Old Dominion Railroad right-of-way, the trail was converted in 1968 with the assistance of a Department of Interior "Rails to Trails" grant and the Virginia Outdoors Fund.

Red Rock Wilderness Overlook Regional Park

A 67-acre passive recreation park located east of Leesburg on Edwards Ferry Road.

Balls Bluff Battlefield and Regional Park

168 acres of historic parkland on the Potomac River bluffs at the end of Balls Bluff Road in northeast Leesburg. It includes a Civil War battle site and the nation's smallest national cemetery.

Temple Hall Farm Regional Park

A 286-acre working farm with interpretive programs for school children and youth located on Route 15 north of Leesburg.

Algonkian Regional Park

A 786-acre park located on the Potomac River in eastern Loudoun County. Facilities include a public golf course, swimming pool, boat ramp and picnic areas.

Brambleton Regional Park

A 361-acre park located on the south side of Beaverdam Reservoir between Routes 659 and 772 in Eastern Loudoun County. Current facilities include a public golf course. The balance of the park is currently being master planned.

Loudoun County Parks and Facilities

Douglass Park and Community Center

This 12-acre park is located on Sycolin Road at West Market Street in Leesburg. The park connects to the W&OD Trail and features a picnic area, baseball field, outdoor basketball, tennis, volleyball, exercise trail, in-line hockey, and a tot lot. The Community Center has a gymnasium, weight room, classrooms, multi-purpose room and kitchen.

Keep Loudoun Beautiful Park

A 3.4-acre park located just east of Leesburg off of Route 7 at the old historic bridge near the entrance to Goose Creek Golf Course. The park offers picnic facilities, a boat launch and fishing.

Claude Moore Park

A 357-acre county regional park located on Route 637 in Sterling with baseball, softball and football fields, a nature center, fishing ponds, trails and the Lanesville Heritage area. Future plans include an indoor recreation center with a family oriented swimming pool.

Franklin Park

A 203-acre county regional park located on Route 7 west of Purcellville planned for an indoor recreation center, baseball, softball and soccer fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, playground, swimming pool, picnic pavilion, pond and horse trails.

Banshee Reeks

An undeveloped 695-acre parcel of land located southeast of Leesburg off of Route 621. This property currently is open only for exploration and wilderness camping for organized troupes. Loudoun County is considering developing Banshee Reeks as a county regional park.

Loudoun County Schools

Recreation facilities are located on most county school properties in Leesburg. These include Loudoun County High School; Simpson Middle School; Catoctin, Leesburg, Cool Spring, and Balls Bluff Elementary Schools; and the School Board Annex.

Other Facilities

A wide range of private and semi-private recreation facilities are located in and near Leesburg:

Ashburn Sports Pavilion

Goose Creek Country Club

J.R.'s Festival Lakes

Lansdowne Resort facilities

Loudoun Country Day School

Loudoun Racquet and Fitness Club

Village Lanes Bowling Center

Westpark Golf Club

YMCA

Raspberry Falls Golf and Hunt Club

In addition, residents of some multi-family and townhouse developments and newer planned residential developments in Leesburg have access to on-site recreation facilities owned and maintained by homeowners associations. These typically include an outdoor swimming pool, tennis courts, multi-purpose courts, tot lots, and a small community center. At the present time there are sixteen such private neighborhood complexes existing or planned throughout the Town.

Park Classification Standards

The standards of the Virginia Outdoors Plan provide guidelines for measuring the adequacy of Leesburg's recreation system in meeting present and future demands. A responsive Town recreation system provides several park sizes which determines the approximate service area and types tailored to the differing needs of various population groups. The system should be accessible by all and should include:

Neighborhood Parks: small, generally 5 to 19 acres with ½-mile service radius, with such facilities as a playground, multi-purpose field and courts; also includes mini-parks of less than five acres. Rotary, Foxridge, Robinson, Greenway, Georgetown, Carrvale, Brandon, , Catoctin Circle, and Raflo Parks are neighborhood parks.

Community Parks: generally about 20-49 acres with 1-2 mile service radius, with such facilities as a playground, picnic area, tennis and basketball courts, swimming pool, lighted ballfields, and walking/jogging trails. Potomac Crossing, Edwards Landing, and Tuscarora Creek are community parks.

Town Parks: large, 50-plus acres with 5-7 mile service radius, featuring playgrounds, tennis courts, swimming pools, lighted ballfields, picnic areas and trails, as well as biking, water areas and support facilities. Ida Lee Park is the only park in this classification.

The Town intends to provide at least ten acres of parkland per 1,000 residents in accordance with the Virginia Outdoors Plan. The park classification system recommends apportioning this acreage as follows: 3 acres should be neighborhood parks, 3 acres should be community parks and 4 acres should be Town parks. Another 10 acres per 1,000 residents should be provided in regional parkland. The Town looks to Loudoun County and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority to provide this regional parkland.

Based on these standards, park needs can be established by classification as well as total acreage. The approximate service areas of these parks are based on size. Also from these standards, search areas can be established to pursue future park sites within the Town. The Town is fortunate to have County parks and schools available to its citizens. In addition, the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority provides excellent regional parks. As a result, Leesburg citizens have available to them a wide variety of diversified parks and leisure opportunities.

As Tables 9.3 and 9.4 indicate, Leesburg presently exceeds the state standard for town parks by approximately 27%, due largely to the acquisition and development of Ida Lee Park. However, the Town has a significant shortage, approximately 51%, in two park categories: neighborhood and community parks.

Map 9.2 shows the existing park service areas as well as those areas where parks are not adequately provided, particularly in the south and east areas of the Town. Leesburg should encourage the development of neighborhood and community parks in these areas through developer proffers, donations, grants, and acquisitions to provide a uniform distribution of park sites throughout the Town.

Table 9.2
Park Classification Standards

Park Type	Acre per 1000 Population	Service Radius	Minimum Park Acre/Park
Neighborhood ¹	31	½ mile	5
Community ²	3	1 mile	20
Town	4	Town-wide	50
Local Total	102		
Regional	10	25 miles	100
TOTAL	20		
¹ Includes mini-parks and tot lots of less than 5 acres			
² Ten acres should include 3 acres of open space/linear parks			

Table 9.3
Existing Leesburg Park Acreage by Classification (1997)

Type	Total Acres	State Standard	Existing Ratio Acres/Population*
Neighborhood	33.2	3 acres/1,000	1.3 acres/1,000
Community	31.6	3 acres/1,000	1.3 acres/1,000
Town	138	4 acres/1,000	5.5 acres/1,000
Total	202.8	10 acres/1,000	8.1 acres/1,000

* Based on January 1997 population of 25,000

Table 9.4
Park Acreage and Open Space Needs

	1997 Demand ¹	1997 Supply	1997 Surplus (Deficit)	2000 Demand ²	2015 Demand ³
Neighborhood	75	45.2*	(29.8)	84	129
Community	75	31.6	(43.4)	84	129
Town	100	138	38	112	172
Total	250	214.8	(35.2)	257 280	416 430

¹ Based on 25,000 population * Includes Loudoun County's Douglass Park (12 acres)
² Based on 28,000 population
³ Based on 43,000 population

Facilities

Facilities are needed to provide community recreation programs, both structured and unstructured. Not all recreation activities require special facilities, but many of them do.

Facilities are not physical exhibits, but rather tools necessary to provide leisure opportunities for the community. The number and kinds of facilities required are determined by the interests to be served, the program to be conducted and the opportunities to be offered.

Facilities that need to be explored further as to need and feasibility include a senior citizen center, teen center and renovation of the historic barn at Ida Lee Park. These facilities were identified in the Department of Parks and Recreation's Strategic Plan.

The Virginia Outdoors Plan also provides guidelines for measuring the number of facilities needed to be developed within the neighborhood, community and town parks. Parks are recommended to be developed based on these facility standards.

Two types of facilities that are increasingly in demand that the Virginia Outdoors Plan does not provide standards for are in-line hockey and lacrosse.

Schools located within the Town limits should assist with facility needs, such as gymnasiums, if planned and constructed with these needs in mind. The school system should be encouraged to include basketball courts in elementary and middle schools to assist with space for practice and games of youth recreational basketball leagues.

**Table 9.5
Facility Supply and Demand**

FACILITY	Standard per 1000 population ¹	1997 Demand ²	1997 Supply	1997 Surplus (deficit)	2000 Demand ³	2015 Demand ⁴
BASKETBALL (Court)	2	50	8.5	(41.5)	56	86
TENNIS (Court)	0.5	12.5	11	(1.5)	14	21.5
BASEBALL (Field)	0.17	4.3	8	3.7	4.8	7.3
SOFTBALL (Field)	0.3	7.5	8	.5	8.4	12.9
SOCCER (Field)	0.1	2.5	10	7.5	2.6 2.8	4.3
FOOTBALL (Field)	0.1	2.5	1	(1.5)	2.8	4.3
VOLLEYBALL (Court)	1	25	4	(21)	28	43
BIKE TRAIL (Mile)	2	50	4.9	(45.1)	56	86
GOLF (Holes)	0.36	9	18	9	10.2	15.5
HORSESHOE (Lanes)	0.1	2.5	3	.5	2.8	4.3
SWIMMING (Pool)	0.1	2.5	1	(1.5)	2.8	4.3
PICNIC (Table)	10	250	65	(185)	280	430
CENTERS (Square Feet)	2000	50,000	52000	2,000	56,000	86,000

¹Standards recommended by 1989 Virginia Outdoors Plan
²Based on 25,000 population
³Based on 28,000 population
⁴Based on 43,000 population

Table 9.6
Park and Schoolground Facilities in Leesburg
1997 Inventory

FACILITY	Foxridge	Robinson	Rotary	Raffo	Catoctin	Greenway	George-Town	Tuscarora Creek	Ida Lee	Loudoun County	NVRPA	TOTAL
PICNIC SHELTER	1											
PICNIC TABLES	12		2	5	1		2	9	2	2		6
TENNIS COURTS					2				6	26		63
SOFTBALL FIELDS	1									9		11
SMALL BASEBALL FIELDS										7		8
LARGE BASEBALL FIELDS		1								2		2
SOCCER FIELDS	1								2	3		6
BASKETBALL COURTS	0.5		1			1			2	9		10
TRAIL MILES	0.4									4		8.5
COMFORT STATION	1							0.2	0.3		4	4.9
PLAYGROUND	1		1			1		1				2
FOOTBALL								1	1	1		6
VOLLEYBALL										1		1
SWIMMING POOL									2	2		4
IN-LINE HOCKEY									1			1
HORSESHOE COURTS										1		1
										3		3

RECREATION

Overview

The town provides a wide range of classes, activities, programs and special events through the Department of Parks and Recreation. The Department publishes three times a year, *Leesburg at Leisure*, a publication highlighting all activities for a four-month period. This publication is mailed to all Leesburg residences and businesses.

Criteria

In developing and providing recreation programs, activities and services, the following guidelines will be considered:

- Serve all elements in the community and be accessible to all.
- Provide constructive and creative leisure opportunities for all and be delivered in a cost-effective manner.
- Provide a varied range of activities and provide diversity and balance.

- Involve residents in planning and carrying out activities.
- Selected and conducted so as to meet personal needs of participants.
- Scheduled so as to meet the needs of participants most effectively.
- Supervised and administered by qualified personnel.
- Regularly and systematically evaluated to determine whether they are meeting department objectives and needs of the community.

The primary recreational facility within the town is the Ida Lee Recreation Center. The center is a 38,000 square foot facility completed in July 1990, featuring a gymnasium, pool, weight/fitness room, multi-purpose room, child care room, vending/lobby area, class/work room and administration area. Most indoor recreation activities are held at this facility.

Currently, program areas offered by the department include the following: aquatics, arts and crafts, fitness/exercise, general interest, youth, outdoors, wellness, team sports, special services, and special events. These programs may have as many as 100-200 classes offered within their area. In addition, Loudoun County offers a variety of recreation activities available to Leesburg residents.

Areas for future program development, as staffing and facilities permit, include senior citizens, teens, and organized sports. These areas were identified in the department's Strategic Plan.

GREEN WAYS

Overview

In addition to demands for active recreation programs, facilities and parks, there is a less quantifiable demand for adequate open space to provide opportunities for passive recreation, such as hiking and biking. These activities are suitable for areas with significant development constraints, including stream valleys and floodplains. Such areas can fulfill an important linkage function as "greenways."

Greenways are areas of open space, usually linear, which connect and protect various natural, recreational and cultural resources. They often follow linear landscape features such as streams, ridges, road rights-of-way, or abandoned railroads. Greenways can be publicly or privately owned and may be open or closed to visitors. They are not necessarily "parks" or public land. Parts of a greenway may be a scenic resource or an important wildlife habitat, owned and maintained by a private landowner, with no public access. Other parts may include public trails for hiking, bicycling, or horseback riding. Greenways serve a variety of functions, including recreation, alternative transportation, wildlife habitat, water quality protection, flood hazard reduction, aquifer recharge, erosion prevention, property value enhancement, economic development, and scenic beauty.

A greenway can be protected in many ways, including floodplain zoning, purchase by a public agency or private land trust, or a voluntary action by a private landowner such as donating a conservation easement along a small strip of land, or simply agreeing to maintain a buffer strip of vegetation close to a waterway. The development process affords the town an opportunity to work with developers to reserve such areas for passive recreational use.

Green Ways and Trails Master Plan

The system is intended to link people and resources, put open space within a short walk of people's homes, and connect major regional and national trails. Greenways would not necessarily contain trails or have public access, and participation of private landowners in the greenway implementation process would be strictly voluntary.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan

The rapid growth of Leesburg in recent years has highlighted the need to put in place an integrated network of pedestrian and bicycle routes to serve as both a recreational and an alternative transportation resource for the town's citizens. Such a network should provide safe and convenient links connecting neighborhoods with business areas, community facilities and open space. The basic elements of the bicycle network--a circumferential loop around town connecting with the W&OD Trail and other regional trails--are shown on the Transportation Policy Map (Map 9.1).

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals

- To develop a comprehensive park system guided by state standards.
- To ensure parks and facilities are safe and accessible to existing and future neighborhoods.
- To provide quality programs and services that reflect the interests and needs of the citizens.
- To improve and enhance environmental quality, recreation, conservation and cultural heritage.

Objectives

- Create a park and greenway system including neighborhood, community and town parks; hiking, biking and nature trails; greenway corridors; and recreation facilities.
- Plan for future park and facility needs.
- Ensure proper development of proffered parks.
- Provide for necessary capital improvements through the budget planning process.
- Complete master plans on all parks.
- Maintain high quality facilities and programs.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Policies

Since the town has assumed the role of providing parks, recreation and greenways, the implementation policies are intended to ensure proper guidance relating to the development of these facilities and opportunities.

1. The town will take full advantage of federal and state funding opportunities for parks and recreation programs.
2. The town will continue to expand and develop its park system.
3. The town will place highest priority on implementation of the Ida Lee Park Master Plan and acquisition of neighborhood and community parks.
4. The town will seek funds from the county to help with the operation cost of Ida Lee Recreation Center.
5. The town will adopt a greenways/trails master plan and incorporate the plan into the land development process and land use decisions.
6. Pedestrian/bike trails will be encouraged in new residential developments and must connect to the town greenways network and other trails whenever possible.
7. The town will pursue public/private ventures to develop recreation facilities.
8. The town will cooperate with the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority in the provision of regional parks and special facilities for Leesburg residents.
9. The town will create options and incentives which will encourage landowner participation in the establishment of greenways and trails.
10. The town will require the school system to include gymnasiums in elementary and middle and to make them available for youth recreational activities during nonschool hours and seek school board cooperation in shared recreation facilities.
11. The town will resolve liability and safety issues which prevent public use of private trails.

Action Program

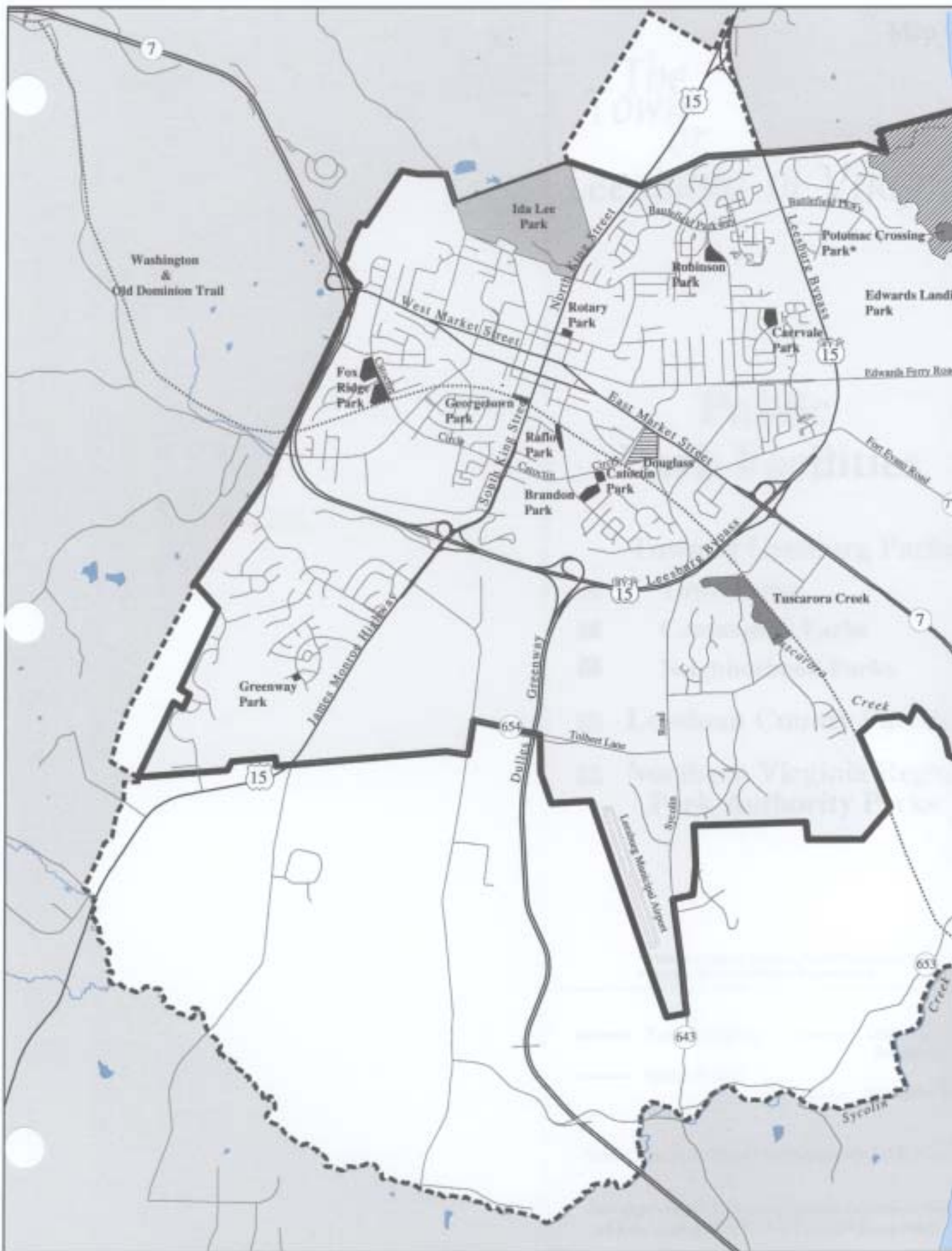
The following actions are recommended during the next five years to implement the town's parks, recreation and greenways goals and objectives:

1. Apply for federal and state funding for park development and acquisition.
2. Request operation funding from Loudoun County for Ida Lee Recreation Center.
3. Develop a town-wide park, trail, and open space master plan.
4. Review options for landowner incentives for trail access and donations.
5. Encourage developments to provide public access easements for private trails.
6. Update park-related items within the Design and Construction Standards Manual.

Annual Parks and Recreation Element Review Criteria

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the town's parks, recreation and greenways policies, track the following:






- Additions to parkland, greenways, open space, and recreation facilities.
- Park development from proffers.
- Trail system development and public access easements.
- Attendance at existing facilities.
- Feedback from users.



The Town of Leesburg in Virginia

Public Park Facilities

Town of Leesburg Parks

-  Town Parks
-  Community Parks
-  Neighborhood Parks
-  Loudoun County Parks
-  Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority Parks

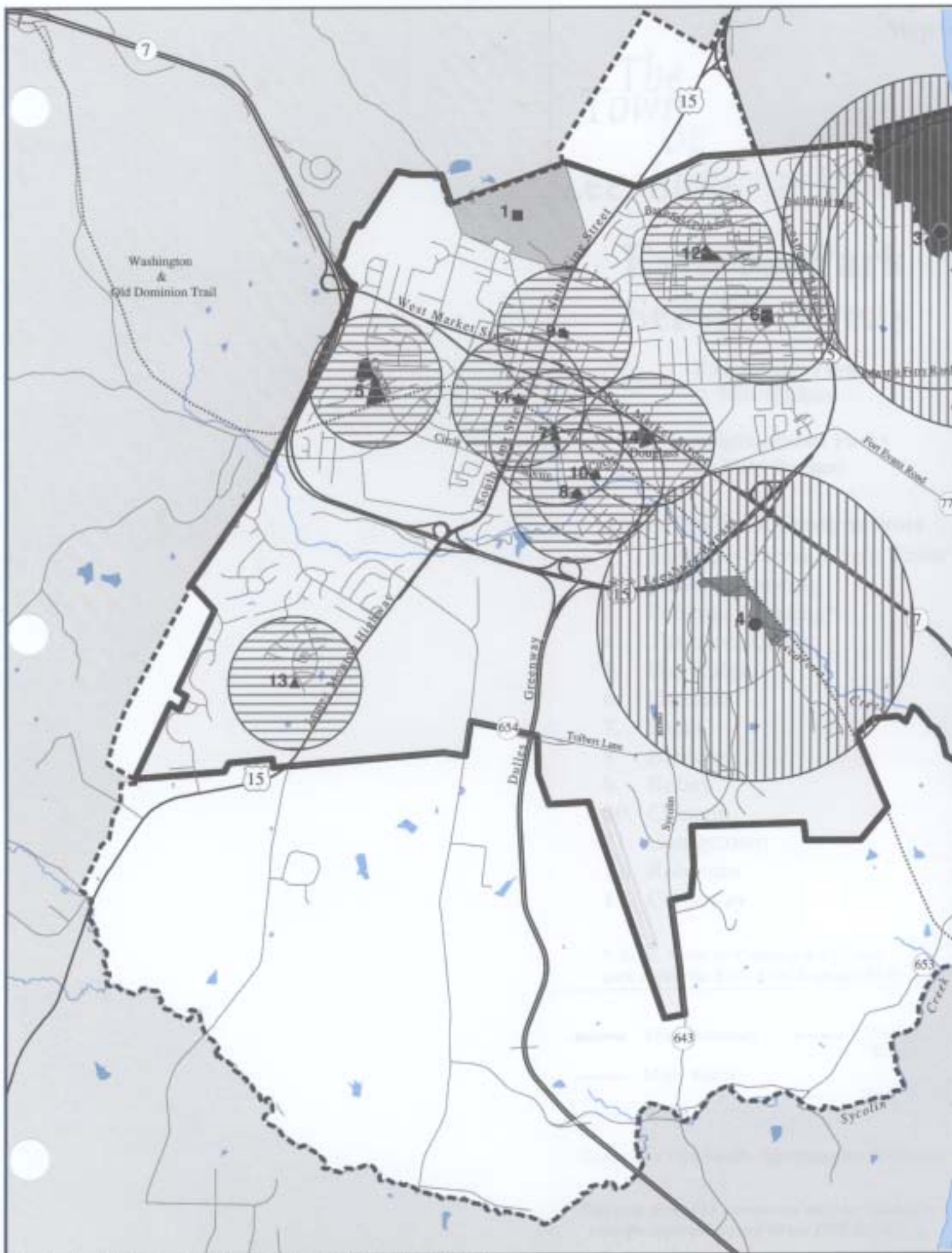
* Potomac Crossing Park is a 20 acre Community Park located within the Balls Bluff Regional Park.

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Town Boundary |  Urban Growth Boundary |
|  Major Roads |  Secondary Roads |
|  Water | |

Scale: One Inch Equals Approximately 3,200 Feet.

This map should be interpreted only in conjunction with the appropriate text of the 1997 Town Plan.





Map Produced By: Northern Virginia Planning District Commission

The Town of Leesburg in Virginia

Existing Park Service Areas



Community Parks
(1 Mile Radius)



Neighborhood Parks
(.5 Mile Radius)

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1. Ida Lee—Serves Whole Town
2. Edwards Landing
3. Potomac Crossing*
4. Tuscarora Creek
5. Fox Ridge
6. Carrvale
7. Raflo
8. Brandon
9. Rotary
10. Catoctin
11. Georgetown
12. Robinson
13. Greenway

* Note: Potomac Crossing is a 20 acre park within the Balls Bluff Regional Park.

 Town Boundary

 Urban Growth Boundary

 Major Roads

 Secondary Roads

 Water

Scale: One Inch Equals Approximately 3,200 Feet

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